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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
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EXAMINER

FISCHETTI, JOSEPH A

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3627

DATE MAILED: 03/23/2006

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/060,423

Applicant(s)

KLOUBAKOV ET AL.

Examiner

Joseph A. Fischetti

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 09 January 2006.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-21 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 14-21 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-31 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 4) <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____ |
| 2) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 5) <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152) |
| 3) <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____ | 6) <input type="checkbox"/> Other: _____ |

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claim 1 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipate by GB288.

GB 288 discloses a checkout station 7/8 configured for self-checkout by customers of items for purchase (the stations 7/8 are configure for self check out in that in the case of an employee who buys his own product he is self checking); a plurality of supervisory terminals 6,6 (Fig.2 embodiment) programmed to be configured to conduct supervisory activities to administer the operation of the checkout station 7/8; a controller 24 operatively coupling a plurality of supervisory terminals to the checkout station, wherein said controller has stored program code configured to enable administration (read as tracking stock of the system 26) of the checkout station by multiple ones of the supervisory terminals.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1-8, 12,13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Humble 136 in view of Ito et al. or UK 288.

Humble discloses a checkout station configured for self-checkout by customers of items for purchase (50); a supervisory terminal is configured to conduct supervisory activities to administer the operation of the checkout station 28, e.g. missing codes inputted into system is read as supervisory activity); However, Humble fails to teach a controller operatively coupling a plurality of supervisory terminals to the checkout station, wherein said stored program code configured to enable administration of the checkout station by multiple ones of the supervisory terminals.

But, Ito et al. do disclose a controller (30) operatively coupling a plurality of supervisory terminals (32, 32) to a controlled device (fig. 12 items 33), wherein said controller is configured to enable administration of the controlled devices by multiple ones of the supervisory terminals. It would appear obvious to modify the system in Humble to include the controller 30 and plural supervisory terminals of Ito et al. because the motivation for this is set forth in Mumble in col. 2 to prevent bottlenecking of the system and thus the plural supervisory system of Ito et al. would do exactly that by allowing the other stations 28 to pick up the load at a point where the one station worker 28 becomes bottlenecked. Ito et al is considered analogous because both Humble and Ito et al. have need to have plural control units because situations develop in both environments where control over the subservient devices is necessary at different locations depending on where the supervisor is presently located in that environment.

Alternatively, UK 288 discloses a controller 24 operatively coupling a plurality of supervisory terminals (6,6 Fig. 2) to a controlled terminal 7/9 wherein said controller is configured to enable administration (tracking of inventory system wide is read as the administration of the terminal 7/9 by multiple ones of the supervisory terminals 6/6. It would appear obvious to modify the system in Humble to include the controller 24 and plural supervisory terminals of UK 288 because the motivation for this is set forth in Mumble in col. 2 to prevent bottlenecking of the system and thus the plural supervisory system of UK 288 would do exactly that by allowing the other stations 28 to pick up the load at a point where the one station worker 28 becomes bottlenecked.

Re claim 2: as set forth above, the checkout station is one of a plurality of checkout stations as taught by Humble 32,32. However, Humble use a single controller to commonly address the plurality of supervisory terminals 32,32, thus the commonly addressed terminal codes are read as plural controllers, but even still, there would be no need to have a plurality of hardware controllers except for redundancy which is not deemed to be a patentable feature.

Re claim 3: the checkout station is one of a plurality of checkout stations as set forth above as taught by Humble 32,32 and is operatively coupled to each of the plurality of checkout stations; and the controller is configured to administer control of the plurality of checkout stations by multiple ones of the plurality of supervisory terminals (Fig. 12 discloses commonly addressed messaging between terminals 32,32 and controller 30.)

Re claims 4,5: a first one of the supervisory terminals is operatively coupled to the controller by a wireless data network (note that Humble discloses a wireless connection at system element 74 for communicating a financial transaction with a credit card which would obviously be applicable to communications between the supervisory terminals and the controller, and Ito et al. discloses wired line Ls connections between the supervisory terminal 32,32 and the members 12,12 which would obviously apply to the connection between checkout and the supervisory terminal in Humble because this would insure non-interfered with communications .

Re claims 6,7(insofar as understood), 8: Official Notice is taken with regard to the old and notorious use of battery powered computer terminals, e.g. lap top computers and for the old and notorious use of a vibrator signal in a pager. Absent a showing of criticality the size of an object is deemed a mere matter of design.

Re claims 12,13: the phrases "can ..." as used throughout this claim is functional which is met by the combination being capable of accomplishing these functions which can be programmed into any computer.

Claims 9,10,11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Humble in view of UK288/Ito as applied above, and further in view of Legge et al.

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The above combination fails to disclose a first one of the supervisory terminals comprises a card reader configured to clear a weight violation at the checkout station in response to a reading of an authorization transponder card. However, Legge et al. do teach using an attendant transponder 50 having a card reader for receiving a pass key to release debit/credit values. It would be obvious to modify the above combination above to include a pass key/transponder for releasing a locked up check out station due to weight discrepancies in Humble because this would make it easier to effect resetting of the locked system by a single sweep of a card which include all codes to effect such a change. Re claim 11: the checkout station is one of a plurality of checkout stations as taught by Humble 32,32 and is operatively coupled to each of the plurality of checkout stations; and Humble further teaches the a supervisory terminal 28 dedicated to conducting supervisory activities over a first (24, 2nd from the left) one of the plurality of checkout stations.

Claims 12,13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Humble in view of UK288/Ito as applied above, and further in view of Wada.


Humble does teach a plurality of supervisory functions that can be performed to administer operation of the checkout station, e.g. code check, pricing, etc. but does not teach a first one of the supervisory terminals conducting supervisory activities consisting of a first subset of the supervisory functions; a second one of the supervisory terminals conducting supervisory activities consisting of a second subset of the supervisory functions; and the first and second subsets of the supervisory functions are different. But Wada does teach such a system wherein in col. 8 last paragraph it is

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disclosed that individual ones of the plural controllers has a different a subset of functions different from the other in order to conduct a different function of HVAC depending on client order. It would be obvious to modify the combination of Humble and Ito et al. to include the feature of assigning separate different functions to each of the supervisory controllers as taught by Wada because this would allow more efficient processing of information through the system. Re claim 13: heat control is common to the first and second subsets of the supervisory activities in Wada as would obviously be the pricing function in Humble.

The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

Any inquiry concerning this communication should be directed to PRIMARY EXAMINER Joseph A. Fischetti at telephone number ^{571 272-6780} ~~(703) 305-0731~~.


JOSEPH A. FISCHETTI
PRIMARY EXAMINER